

Developing Livestock Feed Interventions with the Feed Assessment Tool (FEAST)

Lesson 4: Collecting Data from Focus Groups



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Lesson 4: Collecting Data from Focus Groups

Taking notes

Overview of Focus Group Discussion Guide



Lesson Objectives

By the end of this lesson, you should be able to:

- Explain how data collected from focus groups is used in the Farmer-Centred Diagnosis Report
- List and summarize the major topics covered in the FEAST Focus Group Discussion Guide
- Record data using the Focus Group Discussion Guide
- Describe what constitutes a “household” in your assigned region
- Triangulate an overall answer to a question from multiple individual answers

Key Terminology

- **Household** – A group of people who dwell together and share common possessions/resources, the basic social/economic unit within a society
- **Triangulate** – To find an overall answer to a question based on many individual answers

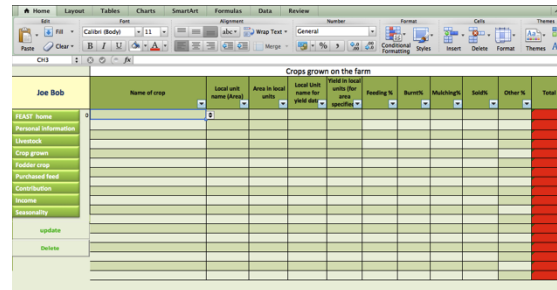
How Data is Used



Data collected
from focus group



Data collected from
individual interviews



The screenshot shows a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet titled "FEAST Data Template". The spreadsheet is organized into several sections. The top section is for "Personal information" and includes fields for "Name of crop", "Local with name (Shona)", "Area in local units", "Local Unit name for yield data", "Yield in local units (per area specific)", "Seedling %", "Burrth", "Mulching%", "Salinity", "Other %", and "Total". Below this is a section for "Crops grown on the farm" with columns for "FEAST name", "Personal information", "Livestock", "Crop grown", "Fodder crop", "Purchased feed", "Contribution", "Income", and "Sustainability". The bottom section is for "Livestock" and includes columns for "Livestock", "Crop grown", "Fodder crop", "Purchased feed", "Contribution", "Income", and "Sustainability".

FEAST Data
Template



Analysis
including
charts, tables,
other output

From Data to FCD Report



- A) -----
- B) -----
- C) -----

1. Analyze **quantitative** data and produce graphs using FEAST Data Template

2. Summarize **qualitative** data collected from focus group discussions



From FCD Report to Implementation

1.



FCD Report

2.



Plan / Road Map
for Implementation

3.



Secure Buy-In from Farmers,
Officials, Other Stakeholders

4.



Implementation
& Follow-Through

Responsibilities of the Team Members

- **Facilitator / Time Keeper:** Make sure all topics are covered in discussion
- **Note Takers:** Make sure farmers' answers are accurately recorded



The Importance of Taking Notes



Facilitator should confirm that note takers are finished summarizing prior section before starting a new section

Keeping an accurate record of discussions and interviews is critical to the FCD process:

- Summarize what is said in a notebook
- Use illustrations to help farmers visualize information and for your own records
- Compare / consolidate notes with other team members after the discussion to ensure completeness and accuracy

Keeping Time

Facilitator, Time Keeper work together to maintain schedule

- Time keeper should quietly signal facilitator or notify facilitator during break if behind schedule
 - Try not to interrupt discussion
- If group gets distracted by minor issues, add issue to “parking lot” list then move on to next major topic / return at end if time permits



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How to Use the Discussion Guide



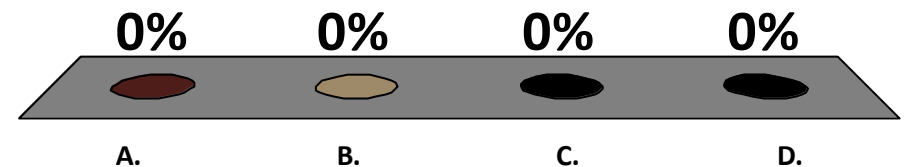
1. For each topic, begin with opening question from discussion guide
2. Allow farmers to debate responses and reach consensus
3. Follow up with probing questions as needed
4. When consensus cannot be reached, hold vote or triangulate from individual responses, and note dissenting opinions

Review Question #1

Which role on the team is most important?

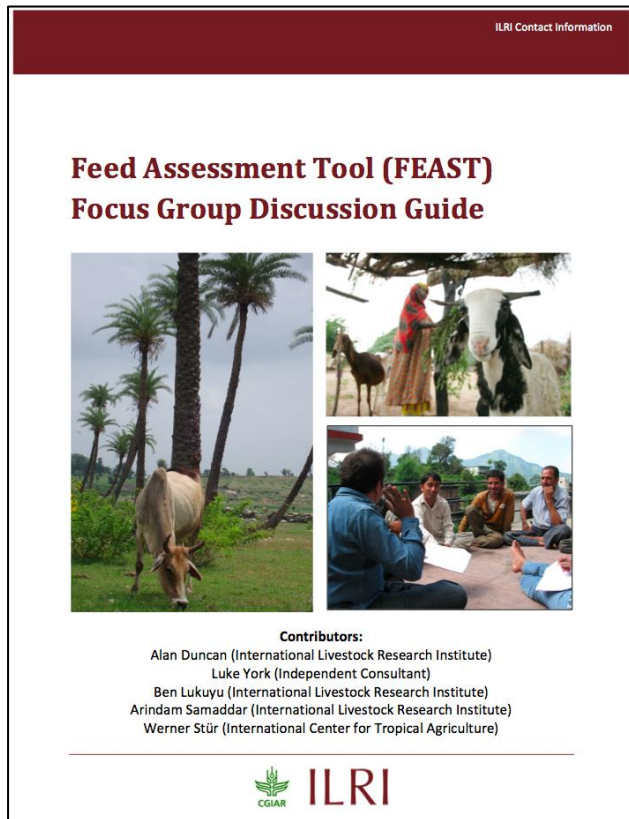
- A. Time keeper
- B. Lead Facilitator
- C. Note taker

D. Each team member plays an important role in making the focus group discussion a success



Focus Group Discussion Guide Overview

Refer to your copy of the Focus Group Discussion Guide and follow along as we review each section.



1. General description of farming and livestock system
2. Management of livestock species
3. Problems, issues, opportunities within the livestock system
4. Distribution of land/wealth among farmers

1. Description of Farming & Livestock System

Generally describe the local farming and livestock system:

- Range of farm sizes
- Household sizes
- Farm labour availability
- Annual rainfall pattern
- Irrigation availability
- Seasonal patterns
- Types of animals raised by households
- Ease of access to credit
- Availability of necessary inputs
 - Plastic, urea, concentrates, etc.



Discussion Guide Section 1 Overview

Review Focus Group Discussion Guide, section 1.



Discussion Guide General Info

General Information

- Fill this part out before meeting as much as possible

Name of Site/Village:

Name of Sub-District:

Name of District:

Country:

Number of Households in the Area:

To be considered a household, the dwelling must have a kitchen.

GPS Coordinates of Meeting Location:

Latitude:

Longitude:

It is facilitator's responsibility, not participants', to determine GPS coordinates (if possible).

Number of Participants Present:

Males:

Females:

Date:

Start Time:

Finishing Time:



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Discussion Guide Section 1.1

General Farming System Description

- Count all land under cultivation, including rented land.
- What are some examples of “local units”?
- How might land tenure systems constrain livestock production?

Minimum: Acres | Hectares | Local Units (circle one)

Average: Acres | Hectares | Local Units (circle one)

Maximum: Acres | Hectares | Local Units (circle one)

If local units, name of local unit:

1 hectare = *Local Units*

What are the common land tenure systems in the village?

Is the land tenure system a constraint to livestock and fodder production? If so how?



Households

Many questions ask for statistics by “household”

- “Household” is the basic socio-economic unit of people dwelling together and sharing possessions, however a culture defines it
- Might include parents and children only, or multiple generations / cousins / distant relatives / servants / etc.
- Can be difficult to define in communities where most members are related, share communal property



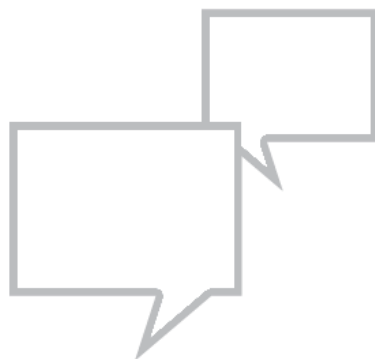
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Discussion Question #1

Discuss the following with the class:

- Do you know what is considered a household in the community where you will be working?
- What is considered a household in the area where you, yourself, live? How many members are in your household?
- How should we define “household” for tomorrow’s field exercise with farmers in this area?



Discussion Guide Section 1.2

Typical / Average Household Size

- What are some reasons people might migrate out of villages?

people per household

What percentage (%) of HH members are migrating out of the village for one reason or the other?

%

Record these reasons.



Rating Scales

- Many questions ask for rating on scale of 0/1 to X
 - 0 or 1 = usually least / lowest
 - 4, 5, or 10 = usually most / highest
 - Even number of responses assures no “neutral” answer (have to select above or below average)
- Ratings always relative to local context / respondent’s experience / some fixed point of reference

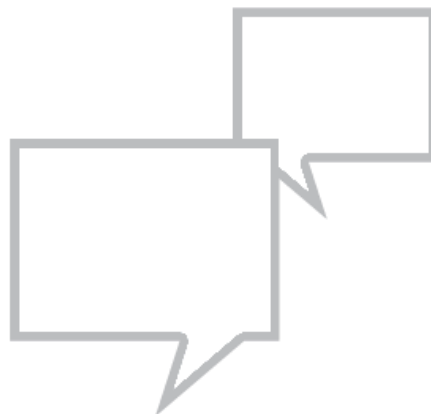


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Discussion Question #2

Discuss the following with the class:

- On a scale of 1 to 10, how much rainfall would be considered a “10” in the area where you live?
- If we were to rate hot weather on a scale of 0 to 5, what temperature would be a “5”? What would be a “2”? How would you rate the weather today?



Discussion Guide Section 1.3

Rainfall Patterns by Month

- Rate on scale of 0 to 5

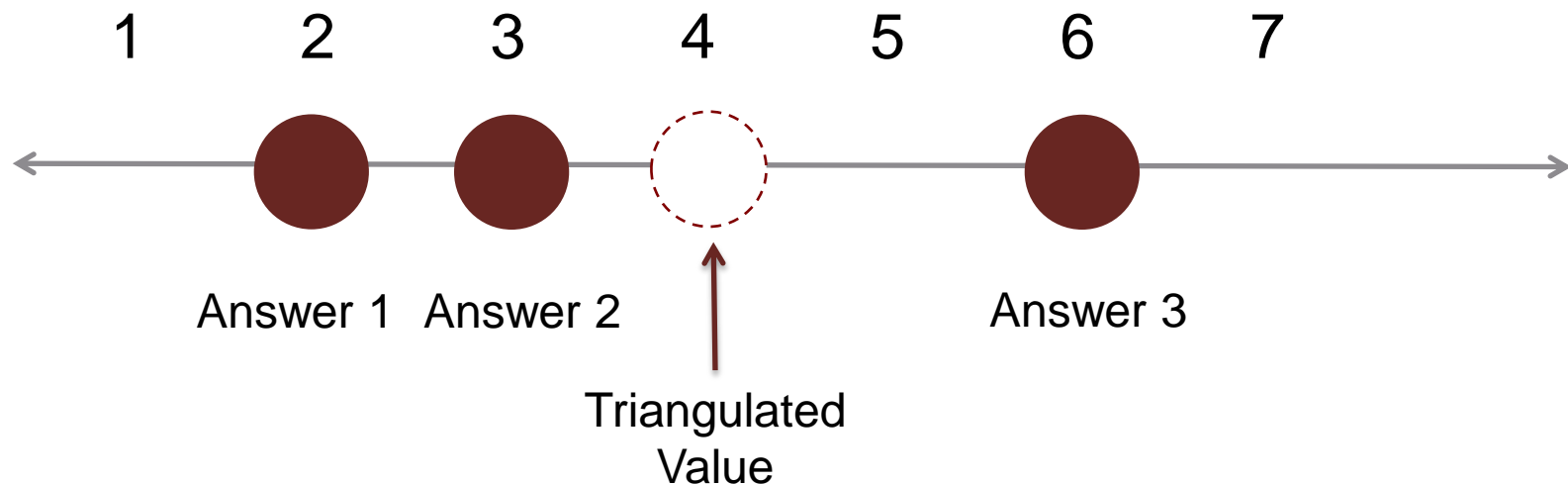
Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Rainfall (0-5)												



Triangulating and Mapping

When varying answers given for question requiring a specific number, “triangulate” an overall / average / typical value based on individual responses

- For example, if farmers cannot agree on average household size, ask each farmer how many people are in their household, then triangulate a value in the general range of most common answers



Discussion Guide Section 1.4

Cropping Seasons

- What factors define seasons within farming communities?

Name of Season	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
1.												
2.												
3.												



Discussion Guide Section 1.5

Availability of Water & Irrigation

1.5. Availability of Water & Irrigation

1.5.1. Is water for watering livestock available in the area?

What percentage (%) of households have access to water? %
For watering livestock?

What types of water sources are available in the area?

Source	Seasonality

What are the distances covered to access water for drinking and watering livestock?

Distance	Seasonality



Discussion Guide Section 1.5 (cont.)

Availability of Water & Irrigation

1.5.2. Is irrigation available in the area?

What percentage (%) of households have access to irrigation?

 %

What types of irrigation are available in the area?

What crops mainly benefit from irrigation?

On a scale of 0 – 4; where 0 = low and 4 = high, how would you score the availability of water for livestock (including fodder production)?



Discussion Guide Section 1.6

Availability of Labour

- What factors might affect labour availability throughout the year?

1.6. When is labour most required?

How much does it typically cost to hire daily paid labour by gender and activity (e.g., ploughing, seeding, weeding, harvesting, etc.)?

Activity	Males	Females

How much does the cost of labour vary throughout the year?

Maximum: Minimum:

Are labour costs affordable for most households?

Are many people leaving the farm to work in the city/town or seek education?

On a scale of 0 – 4; where 0 = difficult and 4 = easy, how easy is it to hire casual labour as and when required?



Discussion Guide Section 1.7

Livestock Species

Livestock species	Primary Use(s) (eg. production of milk for sale, production of milk for household consumption, meat production, draught, manure production etc.)	% of HH that own species.	Average number of animals per HH
Local Dairy cows			
Improved dairy cows			
Local dairy buffalo			
Improved dairy buffalo			
Draught cattle			
Draught buffalo			
Fattening cattle			



Discussion Guide Section 1.8

Availability of Credit

- What are some common sources of credit in smallholder farming communities?

Source	Seasonality

What are the shares (%) of formal / informal credit?

Formal: % Informal: %

What are the conditions for obtaining cash/credit for crop/livestock production?

What percentage (%) of local farmers have access to credit? %

What percentage (%) of focus group participants aspired to access credit in the last 2 years?

%

On a scale of 0 – 4; where 0 = difficult and 4 = easy, how easy is it to access credit when required?



Discussion Guide Section 1.9

Availability of Land

- What are some common reasons for land being left fallow?
- How does land use differ in *extensive* (focused on a large area) vs. *intensive* (focused on a smaller, more concentrated area) systems?

1.9. Is land area available for cultivation increasing or decreasing, and why?

Is land used for more than one crop per year?

If fallowing is practiced, how much land is cultivated vs. how much is put to fallow? (enter N/A if fallowing is not practiced)

Cultivated: % Fallow: %
This is the amount of uncultivated land.

What is the reason for land being left fallow? Is the land being put to fallow increasing or decreasing, and why?

What is the cost to lease one ha or local unit of land?

If local units, name of unit:

1 hectare = Local Units

For the average household, what % of land is used for fodder vs. subsistence (staple cereals) vs. cash crops?

Fodder: % Subsistence: % Cash Crops: %

In case of extensive systems, is there enough land for supplying forage?



Discussion Guide Section 1.10

Access to Markets and Availability of Inputs

1.10. What is the distance / travel time to the local market?

What is the cost of travel to the local market?

Are roads accessible throughout the year? Are there certain times of year or weather conditions when the roads are not accessible?

Who are the main suppliers of inputs in the area?

Supplier	Input Type

On a scale of 0 to 4, where 0 = never available and 4 = always available, how available are crop and farm inputs in the local markets when required?

- “Inputs” include items such as fertilizer, farm implements (hoe, sickle, plough etc.), seeds, feeds, animal health drugs, acaricides, water pumps/pipes, plastic sheeting, irrigation equipment etc.



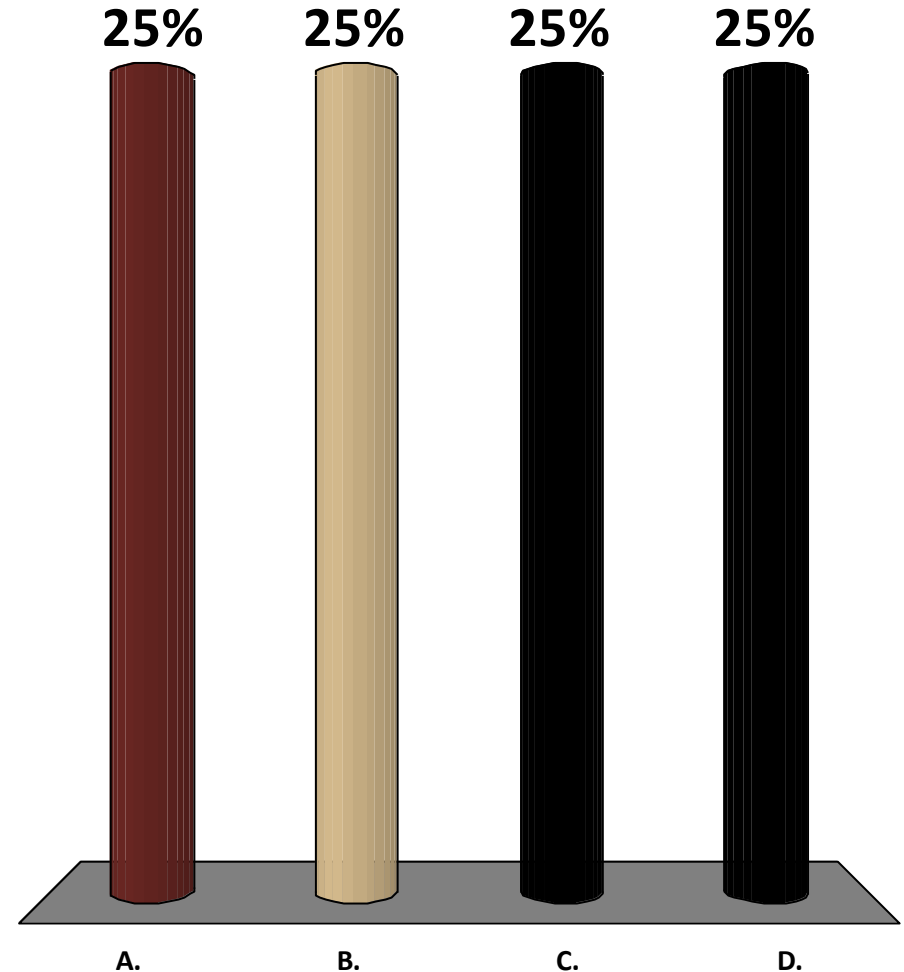
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Review Question #2

How is “farm size” defined in the discussion guide?

- A. Amount of land owned by the farmer
- B. Amount of land owned by farmer plus communal land
- C. Amount of land under cultivation, whether owned or rented
- D. Amount of land rented by farmer



2. Management of Livestock Species



Assess how livestock are managed in the area:

- Types of animals raised (% of households raising these animals and average herd/flock sizes)
- Purpose of raising these animals (e.g. draught, income, fattening, calf production)
- General animal husbandry (including management, veterinary services and reproduction)

Discussion Guide Section 2 Overview

Review Focus Group Discussion Guide, section 2.



Discussion Guide Section 2.1

Housing & Feeding of Livestock

Types of structures used	
Feeding troughs provided?	
Bedding provided?	
Housed throughout the day or partially?	
Are animals housed together or separated (by age, species, sex or type)?	

What is the style of feeding (stall fed, tethered, open grazing or combination)?

If grazing, which areas are utilized?

Are there seasonal differences in style of feeding?



Discussion Guide Section 2.1 (cont.)

Housing & Feeding of Livestock (continued)

Are there differences in style of feeding by animal type?

What percentage (%) of farmers process feed for livestock in the area?

- Feed processing includes chopping, urea treatment, mixing etc

 %

What types of feed are processed?

Do farmers mix homemade rations from processed feeds?

Of the farmers who process feed, what percentage are male vs. female?

Male: % Female: %

What percentage (%) of farmers offer concentrate feeds to their animals?

 %

Is there any other seasonal variation in management methods?



Discussion Guide Section 2.2

Availability of Veterinary / Animal Health Services

- What might fall under the category of “traditional” veterinary practices?

What are some common types of health problems in the area that warrant veterinary attention?

What are the types of services available and who provides them?

Service	Provider(s)	Average Distance	Average Price

How common are traditional veterinary practices?



Discussion Guide Section 2.3

Reproduction Methods

What type of livestock reproduction services are available (Artificial Insemination and/or Bull Service)?

What percentage (%) of local farmers use each type of service?

Artificial Insemination: % Bull: %

For Artificial Insemination (AI) Services:

AI Provider(s)	Availability (0-5, 0 = difficult, 5 = easily available)	Average Price (Semen & Transportation)	Rate of Repeat Service

For Bull Service:

Provider(s)	Type(s) of Bulls Used (local vs. improved breeds)	Availability (0-5, 0 = difficult, 5 = easily available)	Average Price

Are there any other problems/issues associated with bull services?



3. Problems, Issues and Opportunities



Identify problems and potential solutions:

- Is feed a major factor limiting animal production?
- List major problems and issues affecting livestock production
- Use pair-wise rankings to determine most important problems

Discussion Guide Section 3 Overview

Review Focus Group Discussion Guide, section 3.



Discussion Guide Section 3

Problems, Issues, Opportunities

- Employ a method for prioritizing items known as “Pairwise Rankings”

	Problem	Solution(s)
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		



Pair	Problem Considered More Important
Problem 1 vs. Problem 2	
Problem 1 vs. Problem 3	
Problem 1 vs. Problem 4	
Problem 1 vs. Problem 5	
Problem 2 vs. Problem 3	
Problem 2 vs. Problem 4	
Problem 2 vs. Problem 5	
Problem 3 vs. Problem 4	
Problem 3 vs. Problem 5	
Problem 4 vs. Problem 5	



Problem	# of Times Chosen as More Important	Ranking (1 = most, 5 = least)
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		



Pairwise Rankings

The steps in creating pairwise rankings are:

1. List the items
2. Compare each pair of items and choose which is preferable
3. Rank the items based on the number of times each item was chosen, winner of a comparison breaks ties

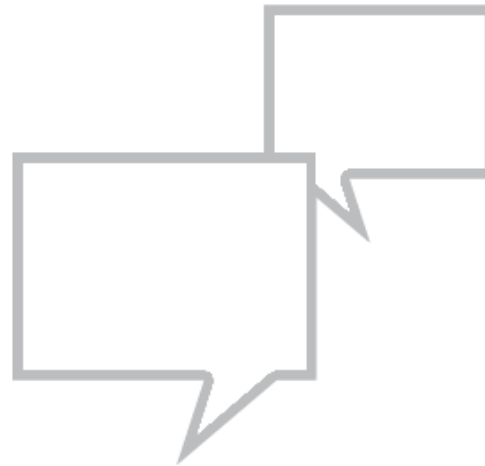
A
B
C

A vs. B
A vs. C
B vs. C

#1	C	2
#2	A	1
#3	B	1

Discussion Question #3

- Name some of your favorite foods
- Of the foods listed by the group choose five
- Have class conduct pairwise rankings (by a vote) to see which is the favorite for the entire class



4. Distribution of Land/Wealth

Use average farm size (as determined in section 1) as starting point to ask farmers:

- How much land would be considered a small farm? Medium? Large?
- What % of local population are landless / have small / medium / large landholdings?



Discussion Guide Section 4 Overview

Review Focus Group Discussion Guide, section 4.



Discussion Guide Section 4

Landholding Categories

- Have participants define which ranges of farm sizes constitute “small”, “medium” and “large” farms by local standards and the percentage of households that fall into each category

Category	Range of Land Size	% of Households that Fall in Category
Landless	0	
Small		
Medium		
Large		



Selection of Farmers for Interviews

- Based on categories as defined by the group, select three farmers to represent each category of landholding.
- Goal is to find at least nine farmers, preferably more
- Try to select farmers whose landholdings would place them in the middle of their category

Category	Names of Farmers	Contact Number
Small	1.	
	2.	
	3.	
Medium	1.	
	2.	
	3.	
Large	1.	
	2.	
	3.	



Concluding the Group Discussion

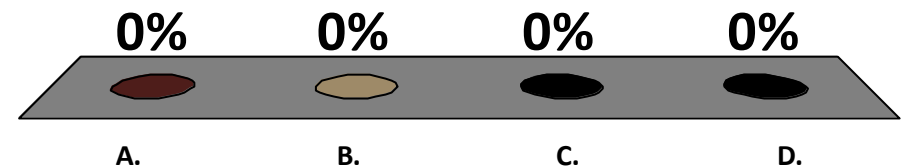
- Thank farmers for their time and explain how information gathered from focus group will be used.
- If lunch or a gift was promised, make sure those who are not staying for interviews receive it
 - For those giving interviews, wait until after interview



Review Question #3

When might we use pairwise rankings?

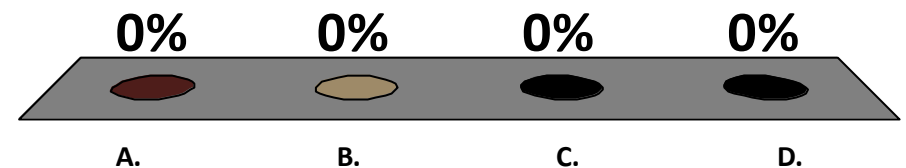
- A. When we only need to compare two things
- B. When we need to compare opposites
- C. When we do not know how many possible answers there are to a question
- D. When we need to determine which of several important items is the most important



Review Question #4

Why would we use a rating scale with an even number of responses?

- A. To make sure we get an equal number of high and low ratings
- B. So respondents can't give a "neutral" answer
- C. Because the FEAST Tool cannot calculate an odd number of responses
- D. All of the above



Lesson Objectives

You should now be able to:

- Explain how data collected from focus groups is used in the Farmer-Centred Diagnosis Report
- List and summarize the major topics covered in the FEAST Focus Group Discussion Guide
- Record data using the Focus Group Discussion Guide
- Describe what constitutes a “household” in your assigned region
- Triangulate an overall answer to a question from multiple individual answers

Questions?